IN THE CLAIMS

1-16. (cancelled)

17. (new) An entertainment system, comprising:

a data server; and

a plurality of data terminals, each operable to receive content data from a data server, the content data including at least one of reproducible program content data or executable program content data, each of said plurality of data terminals being operable to perform at least one of reproducing a program including at least one of audio or video from the reproducible program content data, or executing a program using the executable program content data in accordance with input from a user,

wherein said data server is operable to transmit the content data to said plurality of data terminals over an electronic data network in an order of transmission at least partly determined by at least one of: a plurality of priorities assigned to users of said plurality of data terminals, or a state of congestion of the electronic data network.

18. (new) The entertainment system as claimed in claim 17, wherein said data server further includes a database storing the plurality of priorities, said data server being further operable to access the stored priorities in determining the order of transmission.

19. (new) The entertainment system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the plurality of priorities includes a first priority and a second priority and when the state of congestion of the electronic data network is congested, said data server is operable to transmit the content data in the order of transmission to a first set of said plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a first priority before said data server transmits the content data to a second set of said plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a second priority.

20. (new) The entertainment system as claimed in claim 17, wherein each of said plurality of data terminals is operable to receive selection input from a respective user for selecting a program and to request the user-selected program from said data server, and said data server is operable to transmit the content data corresponding to the user-selected program to one of said plurality of data terminals which requests the user-selected program.

21. (new) The entertainment system as claimed in claim 20, wherein the content data corresponds to a plurality of independent selectable programs, said data server includes a storage unit operable to store the content data, and said data server is operable to select the content data corresponding to the user-selected program from the content data stored in said storage unit and to transmit the selected content data to said one data terminal.

22. (new) The entertainment system as claimed in claim 17, wherein each of said plurality of data terminals is operable to record a timing for receiving the content data prior to receiving the content data, and the order of transmission is at least partly determined by the recorded timings of said plurality of data terminals.

23. (new) The entertainment system as claimed in claim 22, wherein each of said plurality of data terminals is operable to request said data server to transmit the content data in accordance with the recorded timing.

24. (new) The entertainment system as claimed in claim 22, wherein said data server is operable to record the timings and to transmit the content data to said plurality of data terminals in accordance with the recorded timings.

25. (new) The entertainment system as claimed in claim 17, wherein each of said plurality of data terminals is further operable to store the content data received from said

data server prior to performing said at least one of reproducing said program or executing the program.

26. (new) A data server, comprising:

a database storing a plurality of priorities assigned to users of a plurality of data terminals; and

communication means operable to transmit content data to the plurality of data terminals over an electronic data network, the content data including at least one of reproducible program content data for reproduction of a program including at least one of audio or video by one of the plurality of data terminals or executable program content data for execution of a program by one of the plurality of data terminals in accordance with input from a user, said communication means being operable to transmit the content data in an order of transmission at least partly determined by at least one of the stored priorities or a state of congestion of the electronic data network.

27. (new) The data server as claimed in claim 26, wherein when the state of congestion of the electronic data network is congested, the data server is operable to transmit the content data in the order of transmission to a first set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a first priority before the data server transmits the content data to a second set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a second priority.

28. (new) The data server as claimed in claim 26, wherein the data server is operable to transmit the content data corresponding to a user-selected program to one of the plurality of data terminals in response to receiving a request from the one data terminal for the user-selected program.

29. (new) The data server as claimed in claim 28, wherein the content data corresponds to a plurality of independently selectable programs, said data server further

comprising a storage unit operable to store the content data, said communication means further being operable to transmit the content data corresponding to the user-selected program to the one data terminal from the content data stored in said storage unit.

30. (new) The data server as claimed in claim 26, wherein the database stores a plurality of timings for transmitting the content data to each of the plurality of data terminals and said communication means is further operable to transmit the content data to the plurality of data terminals in accordance with the recorded timings.

31. (new) A method for distributing content data, comprising:

assigning a plurality of priorities to users of a plurality of data terminals; and

transmitting content data from a data server to the plurality of data terminals over an electronic data network in an order of transmission at least partly determined by at least one of: a plurality of assigned priorities, or a state of congestion of the electronic data network,

wherein the content data includes at least one of reproducible program content data for reproduction of a program including at least one of audio or video by one of the plurality of data terminals or executable program content data for execution of a program by one of the plurality of data terminals in accordance with input from a user.

32. (new) The method as claimed in claim 31, wherein when the state of congestion of the electronic data network is congested, the content data is transmitted from the data server in the order of transmission to a first set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a first priority before the content data is transmitted from the data server to a second

set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a second priority.

33. (new) The method as claimed in claim 31, further comprising receiving selection input from a user at one of the plurality of data terminals for selecting a program, and requesting the user-selected program from the data server by the one of the plurality of data terminals, wherein the step of transmitting includes transmitting the content data corresponding to the user-selected program from the data server to the one of the plurality of data terminals which requests the user-selected program.

34. (new) The method as claimed in claim 33, further comprising storing content data corresponding to a plurality of independently selectable programs by the data server and the step of transmitting includes transmitting the content data corresponding to the user-selected program from content data stored on the data server to the one of the plurality of data terminals.

35. (new) The method as claimed in claim 31, further comprising recording in each of the plurality of data terminals a timing for receiving the content data and receiving the transmitted content data in the plurality of data terminals, the timings being recorded prior to the plurality of data terminals receiving the content data, wherein the order of transmission is at least partly determined by the timings recorded in the plurality of data terminals.

36. (new) The method as claimed in claim 35, further comprising requesting the data server to transmit the content data by each of the plurality of data terminals, in accordance with the timing recorded by each data terminal.

37. (new) The method as claimed in claim 31, further comprising recording timings for transmitting the content data to individual data terminals of the plurality of data terminals

by the data server and transmitting the timings to the individual data terminals, wherein the content data is transmitted to the individual data terminals in accordance with the recorded timings.

38. (new) The method as claimed in claim 31, further comprising storing the content data received from the data server in the plurality of data terminals and thereafter performing at least one of reproducing the program or executing the program.

39. (new) A machine-readable recording medium having information recorded thereon for use by a machine in performing a method for distributing content data, the method comprising:

assigning a plurality of priorities to users of a plurality of data terminals; and

transmitting content data from a data server to the plurality of data terminals over an electronic data network in an order of transmission at least partly determined by at least one of: a plurality of assigned priorities, or a state of congestion of the electronic data network,

wherein the content data includes at least one of reproducible program content data for reproduction of a program including at least one of audio or video by one of the plurality of data terminals or executable program content data for execution of a program by one of the plurality of data terminals in accordance with input from a user.

40. (new) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein when the state of congestion of the electronic data network is congested, the content data is transmitted from the data server in the order of transmission to a first set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a first priority before the content data is transmitted from the data server to a second set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a second priority.

41. (new) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein the method further comprises receiving selection input from a user at one of the plurality of data terminals for selecting a program, and requesting the user-selected program from the data server by the one of the plurality of data terminals, wherein the step of transmitting includes transmitting the content data corresponding to the user-selected program from the data server to the one of the plurality of data terminals which requests the user-selected program.

42. (new) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein the method further comprises storing content data corresponding to a plurality of independently selectable programs by the data server and the step of transmitting includes transmitting the content data corresponding to the user-selected program from content data stored on the data server to the one of the plurality of data terminals.

43. (new) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein the method further comprises recording in each of the plurality of data terminals a timing for receiving the content data and receiving the transmitted content data in the plurality of data terminals, the timings being recorded prior to the plurality of data terminals receiving the content data, wherein the order of transmission is at least partly determined by the timings recorded in the plurality of data terminals.

44. (new) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 43, wherein the method further comprises requesting the data server to transmit the content data by each of the plurality of data terminals, in accordance with the timing recorded by each data terminal.

45. (new) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein the method further comprises recording timings for transmitting the content data to individual data terminals of the plurality of data terminals by the data server and transmitting the timings to the individual data terminals, wherein the content data is transmitted to the individual data terminals in accordance with the recorded timings.

46. (new) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein the method further comprises storing the content data received from the data server in the plurality of data terminals and thereafter performing the at least one of reproducing the program or executing the program.